

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to voice my concerns for the re-zoning of the McMillan Sand Filtration Site. As a resident of Stronghold for 5+ years, I have witnessed the neighborhood changing as financing for residential projects has picked up and developers have moved in to rapidly flip homes in the area, as well as start the massive construction projects in Brookland. Some of this investment has been good; however, the massive undertaking currently being proposed for McMillan will not be.

Given the multitude of documents already filed with the zoning commission, I will keep the below written testimony brief. There are 5 areas of major concern with the McMillan project for not only Stronghold residents, but DC residents as a whole.

Traffic and parking

The current traffic and road configuration is unable to efficiently handle the traffic which flows around the McMillan site at the moment. It is foolish to think that any of the proposed changes will ably handle the increased traffic associated with the development. Traffic congestion doesn't just impact the commuters and residents trying to get around the city. For example, the McMillan site borders several medical facilities, and EMS response times have already been characterized by the International Association of Firefighters as the worst in the country. An injured DC police officer had to wait nearly 15 minutes last March for an ambulance. What will happen when those ambulances need to reach Washington Hospital Center, one of the best emergency care facilities in the city? Will it take another wrongful death suit for city planners to acknowledge that current and planned infrastructure is not serving residents' needs? A city where residents have been told they are probably better off calling a cab to get to the emergency room is not a city that can afford to ignore these concerns or allow congestion to increase, especially not with the increase in traffic associated with the proposed McMillan site development.

Lack of Metro access

Compounding this issue is the lack of public transportation. The 80 bus route, which is the most used bus in the city, has already been modified due to increased traffic congestion. Building a huge urban shopping and residential center, with park space and community use a secondary concern, will only stress the system further.

Even with a street car service, or increased bus or other WMATA provided transportation, the congestion will only worsen. It is also unrealistic for the City to plan to provide these services. A rail car system for H Street in the northeast quadrant of the city has been planned for many years now. Currently, empty cars sit idly by Union Station.

Canopy tree coverage and green space

The commission has a once in a generation opportunity to create a communal green space that will service residents for years to come. In the past, the City has failed to properly plan for residents' need for park space, necessitating expensive retrofits and decreasing the quality of life in DC. For example, residents in Georgetown hoping to find green spaces must share a comparatively small waterfront parcel, or pay a fee to join or visit Dumbarton Oaks, a park space in the area. On the other hand, residents in the neighborhoods adjoining Rock Creek Park have very easy access to a park and all that it has to offer. With millions of dollars currently being spent to retrofit more recent construction developments with green spaces, notably those around NOMA, it is foolish to think that the same will not have to occur on McMillan at an even greater cost. Given the already massive development in Brookland, it is becoming even more critical that residents be provided a matching green space. McMillan is the perfect site to supply that need.

Flooding and Public Health Issues

The City has already had to expend numerous public funds to manage major storm water runoff and flooding concerns in the Bloomingdale area. Demolishing one of the few barriers collecting any water will further impact those repairs, as well as increase the likelihood of catastrophic flooding. There is currently no compelling plan to combat the current runoff issues, nor does the proposal for McMillan ably address this problem. Indeed, it seems likely to make it worse, especially during the proposed construction. In past years widespread power outages and other flood related events have been immeasurably inconvenient at best, and put residents' lives in danger at worst. Recent revelations about the connection between infrastructure, water supply, and pancreatic cancer in area residents have only compounded these concerns. If the current infrastructure cannot sustain a healthy quality of life for those who use it, we cannot expect it to do so in the future under the strain of this large development.

Affordable Housing and Historical Concerns

The current McMillan proposal is not sensitive to the historic nature of the site or the character of the area. The City lost a great educational tool when it shut down access for visitors, and residents lost access to an interesting and informative historical site. With the planned development, future residents will be permanently denied a piece of history. Furthermore, the site is a jarring change from the current historical integrity of the surrounding neighborhoods. It ruins the charm and character of the area, which the City for so long has protected.

Skyrocketing housing costs have already forced many of my neighbors to move. Planned housing in the McMillan development will inflate these costs. This will be intensified by the influx of students from area universities. When housing becomes too expensive, Catholic, Trinity, and Howard will all have to purchase more land and

build their own facilities to house students. This trend will further blight our historic landscape, displace even more residents, and deplete green spaces, with no end in sight.

In closing, the myriad negative impacts of the project outweigh the possible economic benefits it may provide some residents. For the good of neighborhood, for the good of the DC, and for the good of the residents, it can't be allowed to move forward.

Thank you for your time.

M. Constance McNally